

# **NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT IN THE THE HUNTER-CENTRAL RIVERS REGION COASTAL ZONE .**

## **DRAFT SURVEY RESULTS**

### **COASTAL COUNCILS**



**WYONG SHIRE COUNCIL  
GOSFORD CITY COUNCIL  
LAKE MACQUARIE CITY COUNCIL  
NEWCASTLE CITY COUNCIL  
PORT STEPHENS COUNCIL  
GREAT LAKES COUNCIL  
TAREE CITY COUNCIL**



## INTRODUCTION

The last 12 months have seen notable changes in Natural Resource Management (NRM) regimes with State Department Restructures and amalgamation of Catchment Management Boards into regional Catchment Management Authorities (CMA). For the first time these new regional bodies, CMAs, have had to extend their boundaries to include the coastal zone which effectively goes out to sea to 3 nautical miles.

The expectations placed upon coastal managers as a result of planning reforms, the new regionalisation processes, targets and standards being set, and the perceived reduction in funding for local level coastal zone management seems overwhelming.

The predominant theme arising from the 2004 NSW Coastal Conference which is predominantly attended by local government was that there is a feeling of uncertainty about the effectiveness of these new management structures and administrative arrangements.

This survey was conducted in order to get an understanding of the local level involvement in coastal zone NRM, get an indication of the issues in the region and identify key mechanisms as well as improve information exchange between Local Government officers who deal with coastal issues in the region. The survey also provided opportunity to find gaps and highlight key issues for government and agencies to consider in the new reform process.

Representatives from the Coastal Councils of Greater Taree, Great Lakes, Port Stephens, Newcastle, Lake Macquarie, Wyong and Gosford participated in the survey.

Results have been amalgamated and entered in raw form with minimum, if any, interpretation applied. Result entries that were the same or very similar were not duplicated in sections that were combined.

## OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the survey were to:

1. Establish a network within Local Government for the Regional Coastcare Facilitator.
2. Gather information on the coastal values within the Region.
3. Gather up to date information on Local Government progress with the completion of Estuary Management Plans (EMPs), Coastline Management Plans (CMPs) and other plans of management for Coastal reserves.
4. Identify the obstacles Councils have faced in completing and implementing plans.
5. Identify effective and innovative approaches to Natural Resource Management (NRM) in the coastal zone and promote “good ideas” within the region.
6. Identify opportunities for sharing resources and/or collaboration on regional coastal issues that may deliver improved environmental outcomes locally and regionally.
7. Use survey information to provide advice to the Hunter-Central Rivers CMA on coastal, estuarine and marine issues to be addressed in the Catchment Action Plan (CAP) and investment in coastal and marine projects.
8. Gather information on the need for Coastcare in the H-CR Region.

# SURVEY RESULTS

## 1) Who is the lead within Council, to do with Coastal Zone Management?

<b>Gosford City Council</b> Dr Peter Freewater
<b>Wyong Shire Council</b> Sian Fawcett – Environmental Systems
<b>Lake Macquarie City Council</b> Robbie Economos
<b>Newcastle City Council</b> Frank Cosgrove – City Strategist, Sustainability
<b>Port Stephens Council</b> Brad Horan - Manager of Facilities and Services NRM Staff - Environmental Services section under sustainable planning
<b>Great Lakes Council</b> Gerard Tuckerman – Manager Natural Systems
<b>Greater Taree City Council</b> Graham Gardner – Director Planning and Building(Development/policy). Greg Blaze – Director Engineering (on-ground works) Omar Faruqi - Manager Investigation and design

## ISSUES

Results for the issues table were comprehensive. Although most all of the topics were issues the relevance of those topics varied slightly from Council to Council reflecting the differing priorities and resource allocations.

The topics highlighted below in blue were the only ones seen as **NOT** relevant by all Councils (other than Lake Macquarie and Port Stephens) even if they were an issue.

**Note: Lake Macquarie and Port Stephens indicated that all were issues and relevant within their local government this reflects the priority given to estuarine/marine management to these two Councils.**

Are any of the following topics relevant or an issue to your Council? – please tick those that are.								
i = Issues		r = Relevant						
	i	r		i	r		i	r
<b>COASTLINE</b>			<b>ESTUARINE</b>			<b>MARINE</b>		
Coastal Development			Pest species					
Tourism			Tourism			Tourism		
Water Sensitive Urban Design			Streambank erosion					
Noxious Weeds			Noxious Weeds			Noxious weeds		
Feral animals			Introduced marine pests			<b>Introduced marine Pests</b>		
Vegetation management			Algal Blooms					
Biodiversity			Biodiversity			<b>Biodiversity</b>		
Coastline erosion			Riparian vegetation					
Recreational fishing			Recreational fishing			Recreational fishing		
Commercial Fishing _ beach meshing			Commercial Fishing			<b>Commercial Fishing</b>		
aquaculture			aquaculture			<b>Mariculture</b>		
						<b>By-catch</b>		
Threatened species			Threatened species			<b>Threatened species</b>		
Habitat Loss			Habitat Loss			<b>Habitat loss</b>		
Coastal Wetlands (SEPP 14)			Coastal Wetlands (SEPP14)			<b>Threatened habitat</b>		
Littoral rainforest (SEPP 26)								
Marine Protected Areas			Marine Protected Areas			Marine Protected Areas		
Human access			Human access			Human access		
Vehicle access			Vehicle access					

Boat access		Boat access		Boat access	
Gross pollutants		Gross pollutants		<b>Marine debris</b>	
Stormwater		Stormwater		Water quality	
Visual amenity		Marinas/Port management		Marinas/Port management	
Acid sulphate soils		Acid sulphate soils		<b>Ocean Dumping</b>	
		Fish Kills		Fish Kills	
Extractive Industries		Extractive Industries		Extractive Industries	
Stock access		Stock access			
Floodplain management		Drains/culverts/fish passage			
View Care		Seagrass		<b>Seagrass</b>	
erosion		Mangroves & saltmarsh			
Pollution		ICOLL entrance management			
Intertidal Harvesting		Environmental/natural flows			
Intertidal Protection measures					
<b>Combined Other included: Hazard management, Port enhancement, maintenance dredging and conservation reserve management.</b>					

**What are the key issues relating to the coastal zone for your Council and why are they the key issues?**

<b>Greater Taree City Council</b>	
<b>What</b>	<b>Why?</b>
Pre-emptive cleaning for development	Lack of cleaning controls within Council and regulation by DIPNR.
Floodplain management in urban areas	Due to filling of land associated with residential development.
Loss of habitat corridors and lack of statutory protection.	Due to concerns associated with the financial impact on landholders.
Bushfire management resulting in loss of biodiversity	As a result of significant clearing to construct asset protection zones.
Stormwater management for new development	Especially adjacent to coastal wetlands.
River entrance management to enhance tidal exchange	Pressure on council by oyster industry and fisherman, boat users etc to re-open river entrance and construct breakwall.
Coastal urbanisation	Key growth area.
Estuary dredging – Old Bar/Farquhar	
Breakwall at Harrington	
<b>Great Lakes Council</b>	
<b>What</b>	<b>Why?</b>
Coastal Development	This LGA like others faces massive ongoing development pressures.
Water Quality, protection	We have sensitive estuarine waterways susceptible to declining water quality
Coastal Biodiversity	The significant biodiversity of the coastal zone is threatened by development
Marine parks	The recent Marine Park proposal avoids the significant Wallis Lake, which deserves inclusion.
Coastal erosion	We have significant coastal landform issues regarding erosion/recession.
<b>Port Stephens Council</b>	
<b>What</b>	<b>Why?</b>
Development pressure	Coastal area is prime real estate balance between providing housing and maintaining the environment that attracted people in the first place.

Weed encroachment	Coastal wetlands contain up and coming weeds such as ludwigia (2 species) and salvinia.
<b>Newcastle City Council</b>	
<b>What</b>	<b>Why?</b>
Coastal Hazard Management	Natural resource/urban conflict
Coastal Erosion	Land use impacts/climate change
Biodiversity Management	Land management practices/weed invasion
Estuary Management (general)	Legacy of past land use/ practices
development	Environment and cumulative impacts
Conservation Management	Internationally significant habitat
Water Quality	Environment health/public health
<b>Lake Macquarie City Council</b>	
<b>What</b>	<b>Why?</b>
Coastal Development Pressure	Due to its location, Lake Macquarie is always undergoing pressure from development on our coast.
Estuarine Water Quality	Lake water quality continues to be a major focus for Council and the LM community.
Changes to NRM arrangements	The LM community and council have ongoing concerns over the combined centralisation of NRM arrangements and perceived lack of priority given to coastal areas.
<b>Wyong City Council</b>	
<b>What</b>	<b>Why?</b>
Development	Impacts the others (below).
Ecological decline	Ongoing decline is predicted but is not acceptable.
Sea level change	"A sleeper issue" but will have impacts in future.
Amenity	Used by people.
<b>Gosford City Council</b>	
<b>What</b>	<b>Why?</b>
Development control	
Illegal tree removal	
Erosion control	
Sand dune protection	

## **ORGANISATIONAL** **Does Council have?**

	<b>Gosford</b>	<b>Wyong</b>	<b>Lake Macquarie</b>	<b>Newcastle</b>	<b>Port Stephens</b>	<b>Great Lakes</b>	<b>Taree</b>
<b>Any internal forum where different groups within council meet and coordinate coastal resource-related activities?</b>	No	Estuary Management Committee	Yes, a number of internal forums are held to coordinate internal activities. Eg Vegetation Mgt Cttee; Stormwater water Mgt Cttee.	Yes, Coastline Mgt Plan Implementation Working Group; Hunter Coast & Estuary Mgt Committee; NEMP theme team	Those involved in on-ground NRM meet on a monthly basis but this is not restricted to coastal issues.	Not this is a major deficiency. We have a recommended Coastal Network for groups involved in coastal NRM activities (Dune care)	No
<b>A mechanism that facilitates Inter-agency cooperation. For example Coast /Estuary Committees etc.</b>	Yes	Estuary Management Committee	Yes, the Lake Macquarie Estuary & Coastal Mgt Cttee (LME&CMC) meets monthly and includes reps from most agency reps	Hunter Coast & Estuary Mgt Committee; Joint project mgt team	Port Stephens Council is involved in both the Port Stephens and Hunter Estuary Committees	We have Estuary Mgt Committees for Wallis, Smiths and Myall Lakes/Port Stephens. They are estuary-centric and typically ignore coastal processes	Estuary & Coastline Mgt Committee; Manning Coastcare; Environmental Advisory Committee
<b>Any forums with other Coastal Councils, to coordinate/discuss implementation of Coast Estuary Management plans.</b>	Yes-Hawkesbury/ Broken Bay/ Pittwater areas	Estuary Management Committee	Yes, LMCC, WSC and GCC estuary mgt reps meet with DIPNR and OLM & CI reps to discuss estuary issues.	No. But would like to see happen and am happy to contribute to when and if time permits	Same as above	No	Wallis Lake Catchment Mgt Committee (Great Lakes/ Greater Taree Councils); Hunter Region of Council
<b>An environmental policy which commits to reducing impacts on the coastal zone?</b>	Not specifically	Estuary Mgt Committee		Adopted Coastline Mgt Plan	Port Stephens Estuary Management Plans; Various foreshore management plans	Not specifically	Area specific development strategies incorporate measures to alleviate impacts on the coastal zone. E.g. Hallidays Point

## Do any formal processes exist in Council to link sections within Council and NRM activities in the coastal zone?

<b>Gosford</b>	Yes, coastal and non-coastal NRM issues are housed within the same unit.
<b>Wyong</b>	No
<b>Lake Macquarie</b>	
<b>Newcastle</b>	NEMP – Newcastle Environment Management Plan 2003; Newcastle Coastline Management Plan 2003 implementation
<b>Port Stephens</b>	No
<b>Great Lakes</b>	There are no formal processes as yet.
<b>Taree</b>	An Environmental Management Plan for the LGA is currently being prepared to coordinate natural resource management activities within Council.

## What steps are you taking to integrate NRM in the coastal zone into Council's daily operations?

Note: No information provided for the Gosford or Great Lakes LGA.

	<b>Council Planning</b>	<b>Strategic Planing</b>	<b>Budgeting</b>
<b>Wyong</b>	Coastal Plan	Coastal Plan	? Unsure
<b>Lake Macquarie</b>	Councils Integrated Mgt System (IMS) requires env considerations to be considered in all operations	Via the LM Coastline Mgt Plan, Estuary Mgt Plan, LEP, DCP No1. and Env Action Plan	
<b>Newcastle</b>	NEMP theme team and NCMP working group	Dedicated program includes major projects	Strategic projects budgets committed
<b>Port Stephens</b>	Different sections of Council seek to involve and inform each other as required through project development.	Larger plans have steering committees from all relevant areas	There is not specific budgets for coastal area, only project specific ones
<b>Taree</b>		See above – Plan will be a component of Councils Annual Management Plan	

## PRIORITY

### How important is improving the coastal zone in comparison to the other numerous competing demands on Council?

<b>Gosford</b>	As important within our unit
<b>Wyong</b>	Major ecological decline will occur inland of immediate coast and in the lakes (possibly)
<b>Lake Macquarie</b>	Improvements to the lake and coastline are considered a high priority by council
<b>Newcastle</b>	High priority at present due to identified works & incidents but possibly still lack of awareness of current status of coastal assets & significance to economic & env health.
<b>Port Stephens</b>	Providing clean and productive waterways and maintaining a balance between natural and built environments are objectives of councils management plan.

<b>Great Lakes</b>	Very high, the coast is very special and caters for heavy social, recreational & economic use. Much of the Great Lakes LGA coast is public land.
<b>Taree</b>	Low, infrastructure requirements take priority

## How committed is council to NRM in the coastal zone?

**Note:** No information was provided for the Wyong LGA.

	Not at all	Moderately	very	Strongly
<b>Gosford</b>			Depends on part of Council	
<b>Lake Macquarie</b>				Yes
<b>Newcastle</b>		Reality possibly artificially skewed due to recent media attention		
<b>Port Stephens</b>			Yes	
<b>Great Lakes</b>			Yes- But limited by lack of policy and strategic direction	
<b>Taree</b>		Yes		

## What NRM activities in the coastal zone does council undertake?

**Note:** No information was provided for the Wyong and Lake Macquarie LGA.

	Activities.	Resources committed – Funding sources?	How were they developed?	How are they integrated within Council?
<b>Gosford</b>	Bushcare/Coastcare; Outdoor maintenance work crews	Recurrent with full time employees		
<b>Newcastle</b>	1. Asset mgt/ assessment 2. Biodiversity Mgt 3. Flood Management 4. Stormwater/ WQ Mgt  5. Contribution to estuary mgt programs –ongoing (Hexham, KWRP) 6. Strategic projects (estuary plan, stocko mgt plan)	(large) ongoing budget CSO/ 2 yr grant funding 1-2 officers 2-3 officers (among other projects), 12 mth rolling program  Govt policy program and from NCMP	From Coastline Mgt Plan? From NCMP?  Flood risk ID	NCMP Implementation working group. HC & EMC and NEMP teams  Flood risk Management Cttee. Multi-stakeholder team NCC depts/DEC/HWC  Integration with CMA program.  Through HCEMC
<b>Port Stephens</b>	1. Relevant section of Port Stephen Estuary Plan 2. Wetland Mapping  3. Weed Control	Enviro levy will fund foreshore plan and Clean Waterways program. NHT funding, Enviro levy.  Volunteers, grants, revenue	Prioritise determining through estuary committee.  It was an area of identified need.  Survey by weeds officer	Prioritise determining through estuary committee  Council staff managing program within Enviro Management Plan. All weed enquiries flow through the one point.

<b>Great Lakes</b>	1. Supports rehabilitation/ stabilisation / restoration 2. Assessment and strategic planning			
<b>Taree</b>	1. Community support officer 2. Coastcare volunteers supervision 3. Regeneration activities/Waterways 4. Developing plans of mgt for coastal reserves  5. Community Plant nursery.  6. Stormwater Mgt	In-kind council, NHT funded. Part time salary for supervisor. Grants, Council 50% in-kind. Funds for implementation generally come from grants and budget. Propagation of plants using council facilities for regeneration projects in coastal zone.  Constructed wetlands at Blackhead funded by the Stormwater Trust (12 mths).	Supports landcare & community groups. Bitou bush volunteers	Noxious weeds program

## **PLANNING AND POLICY**

### **Does Council Have?**

<b>A Coastline Management Plan (or similar)?</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Gosford	Y		
Wyang			In Progress
Lake Macquarie	Y		
Newcastle	Y		Plan is driver for most of coastline management
Port Stephens		N	Foreshore Management Plan just for estuary
Great Lakes		N	
Taree		N	
<b>An Estuarine Management Plan (or similar)?</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Gosford	Y		
Wyang			In Progress
Lake Macquarie	Y		
Newcastle		N	In preparation.
Port Stephens	Y		Developed 2000
Great Lakes	Y		Wallis, Smiths and Myall Lakes/Port Stephens
Taree	Y		In development
<b>A vegetation management plan (or similar)?</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Gosford	Y		
Wyang			Unsure what you mean –there is tree clearing etc
Lake Macquarie	Y		
Newcastle		N	In preparation- delivery commenced ahead of final report.
Port Stephens		N	In development for urban area. Koala plan makes a contribution.
Great Lakes	Y	N	A draft Vegetation Strategy has been prepared.
Taree	Y		Draft stage only
<b>A weed management plan (or similar)</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Gosford	Y		
Wyang			
Lake Macquarie	Y		
Newcastle		N	In preparation- delivery commenced ahead of final report.
Port Stephens		N	Weed specific plans however we have endorsed

				the regional strategy.
Great Lakes			N	
Taree		Y		Noxious weeds – Regional Weed Strategy
<b>An intertidal (rock platform) conservation agreement /plan (or similar)?</b>		<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Gosford				Not sure
Wyang				
Lake Macquarie			N	
Newcastle			N	Subject of current discussion.
Port Stephens			N	Marine reserves managed by Fisheries
Great Lakes			N	
Taree			N	
<b>Coastal Conservation Areas?</b>		<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Gosford				Not sure
Wyang				
Lake Macquarie		Y		
Newcastle		Y		NPWS reserves, Councils open space
Port Stephens		Y		Marine reserves, national parks, areas zoned enviro protection.
Great Lakes		Y		No marine parks; but series of coastal national parks
Taree		Y		Areas zoned 7a, national parks/crown reserves
<b>Enforcement officers working in the coastal zone who have they been provide with training on natural resource management?</b>		<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Gosford			N	
Wyang				?
Lake Macquarie		Y		Officers are not specific to coastal zone, but whole of Council LGA.
Newcastle			?	
Port Stephens				
Great Lakes		Y		
Taree			N	

## NEW DEVELOPMENT

Note: No information was provided for the Gosford LGA.

	Lake Macquarie	Newcastle	Port Stephens	Great Lakes	Taree
<b>Does Council require reference to Coast and Estuary Management Plan and other coastal plans / strategies to be submitted with coastal development applications?</b>	Sometimes	Not sure-In some cases yes, especially for major development	No	No, but assessing officers consider such.	Devt - strategies
<b>Do Council's planning instruments require adequate assessment of the natural resources and ecological communities along the coast?</b>	I think so	Probably not-statutory process only.	Yes	Yes, but this needs to be intrinsically linked to corresponding decision making and state significant	Ecological Assessment Guidelines in preparation. Conservation Strategy Plan required.
<b>Do Council's planning instruments specify NRM targets, outcomes or</b>	Yes	Generally no, some for	No	Sometimes, eg water	LEP is being reviewed to

measures to be achieved/provided at new developments.		urban water management		quality	strengthen commitment to environment outcomes
Is council involved in the regional settlement strategy process. Training of multi criteria analysis in Council.	I think so	Yes	Yes		No
Do Council's requirements incorporate water sensitive urban design techniques, which seek to prevent stormwater pollution and excessive stormwater flows at source?	Yes	Yes	Yes- specifically sub-division or duplexes with impervious surfaces	We are trying to implement such through a water quality DCP	Yes
Does Council's Section 94 Plan include provision for native revegetation measures?	Yes	No-focus needs to change.	No	No	No

## **OPPORTUNITIES AND BARRIERS**

**Can you identify any opportunities or barriers to improving coastal zone NRM in Council?**

### **Opportunities**

**Note: Due to the amount of overlap responses to this section were combined**

<b>External</b>	<b>Internal</b>
The re-vitalisation of Coastcare	
Better linkages with other councils and agencies would help	Building on the sources of OLM&CC program
Better utilisation of existing forums by CMA and state agencies to collaborate with Councils and community	Tech staff to be dedicated to tasks
Adequate baseline information for decision making; increased awareness of issues/policies	GIS system rollout across Council
Collaborative data collection and support services	Education across organisation
Funding for projects	Increase commitment to Water Sensitive Urban Design
Collaboration with special interest groups	Biodiversity study to know what we've got
Formal liaison/reference in CAP and the activities of the CMA	Development of a coastal management plan
Continued liaison/support through Hunter REMS	Formation of a coastline management committee

Supportive community groups	Implementation of Coastal Management Plan including strategic actions.
Demographic changes (seachange)	CSO can work with groups
Land speculation and development pressures	Lack of resources and commitment to ESD.

## Barriers

External	Internal
Loss of Coastcare led to a reduction in momentum for coastal groups	Institutional inertia
Involvement in projects which are not the major priority – issues not understood or acted on.	Change of thinking needed in asset management system
Lack of communication with Local Government from CMA and State Agency.	If there if no coastal management plan that's been developed.
State Government funding assistance	
Lack of data management system	
Lack of inclusion in planning and development proposals	
Access to funding to implement plans	
NPWS resumption of coastal reserves Saltwater, Blackhead, Old Bar	
May alienate community support	

## In what areas could council improve staff's knowledge and skills in coastal management?

Note: Due to the amount of overlap responses to this section were combined

Technical / process	Project development	Operational	Managerial	General awareness / understanding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In all areas of NRM , not just coastal issues, but yes to all areas in relation to coastal issues</li> <li>Councillors knowledge needs to improve re: coastal mgt issues.</li> <li>Training in coastal processes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This would only improve ability to deliver.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On-ground understanding of coastal issues is always required.</li> <li>Habitat and erosion control.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More high level understanding of issues is always important.</li> <li>Significance of values and need for responsible mgt (although some might not want to know).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Range of issues and opportunities and benefits of better management.</li> </ul>

## **REMEDICATION / REHABILITATION**

### **Does Council Have?**

**Note:** No information was provided for the Wyong LGA.

	<b>Gosford</b>	<b>Lake Macquarie</b>	<b>Newcastle</b>	<b>Port Stephens</b>	<b>Great Lakes</b>	<b>Taree</b>
<b>A budgeted program for the regular inspection and maintenance of coastal sites for rehabilitation?</b>	Yes-outdoor staff	Yes	No formal structure within Council		Yes	No
<b>A register of community members groups who volunteer on the coast</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Only the ones registered with council, there are others with NPWS	Yes	Yes
<b>A program which supports the community in their rehabilitation efforts on the coast.</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	The Council supports volunteer efforts through technical advice, financial support, insurance coverage and incorporation into larger plans	Not well	Yes
<b>A program of investigating and rehabilitating coastal land impacted by noxious weeds</b>	Yes-Noxious Weeds Officer	No	Possibly by default but not actually structured within council	Yes, through weeds officer, volunteers, paid bush regeneration and spraying.	Yes	Sort of, Bitou Bush program run by volunteers (55 + mutual obligation) working in coastal reserves- weed removal and some rehab undertaken

## **ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION – COASTAL**

**Does Council have an education Program for the coastal zone?**

**If yes.....**

**Note:** No information was provided for the Wyong LGA

<b>Who is the education program aimed at: community, commercial /industrial?</b>	
<b>Great Lakes</b>	We have estuary and water quality focused education programs for both the community and for business/industry.
<b>Port Stephens</b>	Council runs a series of educational programs ranging from encroachment of backyards to waste. Council employs stormwater and waste education officer and bushland and CSO.
<b>Newcastle</b>	Community – commercial and industrial sectors need to be included.
<b>Lake Macquarie</b>	Community water quality improvement programs (Adopt a Squid) aimed at improving estuary WQ.
<b>Gosford</b>	Bushcare volunteers and the wider community through Bushcare workshops.
<b>What does the program aim to achieve?</b>	
<b>Great Lakes</b>	

Port Stephens	Greater awareness in a range of issues that effect the environment.
Newcastle	Appreciation of values and management issues and encourage responsible management.
Lake Macquarie	Increase estuarine water quality.
Gosford	Specific and general enviro education including coastal topics.
<b>How is the program evaluated and refined?</b>	
Great Lakes	Recognition of behaviours and responsibilities to prevent water pollution.
Port Stephens	Each campaign is reviewed at its finish.
Newcastle	Evaluated from feedback, not sure that it has been refined.
Lake Macquarie	Ongoing evaluation, primarily using stormwater trust evaluation matrix technique.
Gosford	Feedback from participants
<b>Will the program be followed up or repeated in the future?</b>	
Great Lakes	Various means.
Port Stephens	Through the review it is decided what worked and how it can be modified to re-run in the future.
Newcastle	Yes
Lake Macquarie	Yes
Gosford	Yes, definitely. They are very popular.
<b>Does Council actively seek to involve the community in coastal natural resource management project (including monitoring?)</b>	
Great Lakes	Sometimes, but not particularly well.
Port Stephens	Yes, we have very active community involvement which is the driving force in the rehabilitation of many areas.
Newcastle	Yes
Lake Macquarie	Yes
Gosford	Yes

## **SPECIAL COASTAL FEATURES IN YOUR LGA**

Coastal Heritage	Yes	No	Comments
Taree	Y		Manning river mouth at Harrington Saltwater Crowdy Bay NP, North Harrington Littoral Rainforest, Register of the National Estate, Crowdy Lighthouse/Harrington inlet, Saltwater (aboriginal) Reserve (NPWS).
Great Lakes	Y		
Port Stephens	Y		Only one formally protected is Wanebi wetland
Newcastle	Y		Aboriginal and European archaeology, mythological sites and natural areas (although generally not protected).
Lake Macquarie	Y		Catherine Hill Bay
Wyong	Y		
Gosford			
Sites significance to migratory birds	Yes	No	Comments
Taree	Y		Little Tern – Manning Point/Farquhar Park and Old Bar inlet / Farquar
Great Lakes	Y		
Port Stephens	Y		Several important wetlands
Newcastle	Y		Naturally significant habitat areas and internationally
Lake Macquarie	Y		Lots
Wyong	Y		

Gosford	Y		
<b>Intermittently open and closed lagoon.(ICOLLs)</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Taree	Y		Blackhead lagoon/saltwater lagoon. Harrington Lagoon Saltwater, Blackhead, Racecourse Creek, First Rock Gully
Great Lakes	Y		Smiths Lake
Port Stephens		N	
Newcastle	Y		Glenrock lagoon with SCA
Lake Macquarie	Y		Glenrock Lagoon
Wyong	Y		
Gosford		N	
<b>Wetlands of Local, State, National significance.</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Taree	Y		SEPP 14 Wetlands scattered throughout Crowdy Bay NP (Nationally imp) Cattai wetlands/ Great Swamp (Crowdy Bay NP) + international – Myall Lake Ramsar
Great Lakes	Y		
Port Stephens	Y		
Newcastle	Y		Ramsar listed wetlands – Kooragang Island on international flyways path +Migratory species habitat and fishery habitat on floodplain
Lake Macquarie	Y		36 SEPP 14 wetlands in LGA
Wyong	Y		
Gosford	Y		
<b>Littoral rainforest areas.</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Taree	Y		Numerous SEPP 26 areas in LGA Numerous sites (6) all covered with Vegetation Restoration Action Plans
Great Lakes	Y		
Port Stephens	Y		
Newcastle	Y		Just – Glenrock SCA and remnants at Ash Island
Lake Macquarie	Y		Green Point – Listed; Salts Bay - pending
Wyong	Y		
Gosford	Y		
<b>Saltmarsh areas.</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Taree	Y		Mudbishops – Old Bar
Great Lakes	Y		
Port Stephens	Y		
Newcastle	Y		Heaps under threat and declining
Lake Macquarie	Y		
Wyong	Y		
Gosford	Y		
<b>Significant Coastal Heath Lands</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Taree	Y		Old Bar Park – Old Bar
Great Lakes	Y		
Port Stephens	Y		
Newcastle	Y		Relatively small area, but still valuable on coast. Glenrock SCA and KE Park
Lake Macquarie	Y		
Wyong	Y		
Gosford	Y		

Significant Coastal Headland Communities.	Yes	No	Comments
Taree		N	
Great Lakes	Y		
Port Stephens	Y		
Newcastle	Y		Relatively small area, but still valuable on coast. Glenrock SCA and KE Park
Lake Macquarie	Y		
Wyong	Y		
Gosford	Y		
Coastal National Parks, Nature Reserves etc..	Yes	No	Comments
Taree	Y		Crowdy Bay NP, Khappinghat NR, Saltwater NR Towibakh NR,
Great Lakes	Y		
Port Stephens	Y		
Newcastle	Y		Glenrock SCA, Kooragang, Hexham, Council parks
Lake Macquarie	Y		
Wyong	Y		
Gosford	Y		
Threatened Species habitat.	Yes	No	Comments
Taree	Y		Little Tern, Grey-headed flying fox, Austral Toadflax, Bat Spp, Koala, osprey, gliders etc
Great Lakes	Y		
Port Stephens	Y		
Newcastle	Y		Significant areas under threat
Lake Macquarie	Y		
Wyong	Y		
Gosford	Y		
Marine Reserves.	Yes	No	Comments
Taree		N	
Great Lakes		N	But The Pinnacles is a critical habitat for the Grey Nurse Shark.
Port Stephens	Y		
Newcastle		N	Currently on agenda for discussion
Lake Macquarie		N	This keeps coming up as an issue.
Wyong	Y		
Gosford			Not sure
Protected species and associated habitat.	Yes	No	Comments
Taree	Y		
Great Lakes	Y		
Port Stephens	Y		
Newcastle	Y		Wide range – terrestrial, fresh, estuarine, marine
Lake Macquarie	Y		
Wyong	Y		
Gosford	Y		
Pristine Waterways.	Yes	No	Comments
Taree			Questionable
Great Lakes		N	
Port Stephens		N	Declining water quality
Newcastle		N	No hope
Lake Macquarie		N	

Wyong		N	
Gosford		N	
<b>Rock Platforms – intertidal biological diversity.</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Taree	Y		
Great Lakes	Y		
Port Stephens	Y		
Newcastle	Y		Several good examples
Lake Macquarie	Y		
Wyong	Y		
Gosford	Y		
<b>Intertidal Protected Areas.</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Taree		N	
Great Lakes		N	
Port Stephens		N	
Newcastle		N	Currently on agenda for discussion
Lake Macquarie		N	
Wyong		N	
Gosford			Not sure
<b>High Value Tourist Waterways.</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Taree	Y		Manning
Great Lakes	Y		
Port Stephens	Y		
Newcastle	Y		Lots of Potential for Hunter River
Lake Macquarie	Y		
Wyong	Y		
Gosford	Y		
<b>Key Scenic landscapes.</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Taree	Y		National parks -Crowdy Head Tomboiler, Blackhead Beach
Great Lakes	Y		
Port Stephens	Y		
Newcastle	Y		Coastal views and estuary and floodplain vistas
Lake Macquarie	Y		
Wyong	Y		
Gosford	Y		
<b>Key Scenic vantages for whale and dolphin watching.</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Taree	Y		Crowdy Head, Blackhead
Great Lakes	Y		
Port Stephens	Y		
Newcastle	Y		Headland
Lake Macquarie	Y		
Wyong	Y		
Gosford	Y		
<b>Offshore Island habitat.</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Taree	Y		Rock off Old Bar
Great Lakes	Y		
Port Stephens	Y		

Newcastle		N	
Lake Macquarie	Y		
Wyong	Y		
Gosford		N	
<b>Subtidal Reefs.</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Taree	Y		Old Bar
Great Lakes	Y		
Port Stephens	Y		
Newcastle	Y		Minor
Lake Macquarie	Y		
Wyong	Y		
Gosford		N	
<b>Iconic surfing beaches.</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Taree	Y		Saltwater Point
Great Lakes	Y		
Port Stephens	Y		
Newcastle	Y		Plus Surfest event focus
Lake Macquarie	Y		
Wyong	Y		
Gosford	Y		
<b>Iconic Headlands.</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Taree	Y		Saltwater
Great Lakes	Y		
Port Stephens	Y		
Newcastle	Y		Nobby's (Fort Scratchley)
Lake Macquarie	Y		
Wyong	Y		
Gosford	Y		
<b>Iconic Waterbodies.</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Taree	Y		Saltwater lagoon
Great Lakes	Y		
Port Stephens	Y		
Newcastle		N	
Lake Macquarie	Y		
Wyong	Y		
Gosford	Y		
<b>Other</b>	<b>Comments</b>		
Taree – Manning River	Delta – 2 openings, 3 islands in Delta mouth (Jones, Mitchell, Oxley).		

## **COASTCARE FACILITATOR IN THE HUNTER -CENTRAL RIVERS REGION.**

### **How could the Coastcare Facilitator assist Council in taking opportunities or overcoming barriers?**

- Facilitate regional communication and liaison with CMA i.e. The importance of coastal, marine issues.
- Assisting the establishment of inter-agency and regional partnerships to address key issues; securing funding for coastal research, management or repair; liaising with State and Federal bodies regarding key local issues that require attention.
- Where to start? Coastcare is a recognised and trusted face for groups to access technical, professional, on ground and resource assistance. It was a sad day when the volunteers were told Coastcare was being wound back.
- In the past there has been a gap in providing technical expertise for coastal areas. Previous Coastcare funding was also valuable because it recognised the unique factors affecting the coast.
- Develop/prioritise issues for the region and get Council sign-off.
- Keep up existing communication/profile with staff; Push issues through HROC and CMA (especially); I think the expert panel idea is an excellent one!

### **What role do you see as important for the Regional Coastcare Facilitator in your Council?**

<b>Example</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>Providing information.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very important</li> <li>• Specialist advice for volunteers and council</li> <li>• Representation at Manning Coastcare, Estuary and Coastline meetings.</li> <li>• Circulation information on projects that have worked. Potential a tour of these areas for volunteers.</li> <li>• Maintain continuity of existing advice on issues.</li> </ul>
<b>Brokering existing initiatives.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes – moderately important</li> <li>• Yes, seen as reliable third party</li> <li>• Definitely, in conjunction with Council CSO, CGC, opportunities in estuary, support existing coast programs</li> </ul>
<b>Establish new processes.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Only if existing processes are not functioning</li> <li>• Very important</li> <li>• Yes if needed</li> </ul>
<b>Establishing new programs.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maybe, but only if existing processes are not functioning</li> <li>• Yes very important</li> <li>• As it is called “Coastcare” it really gets coastal groups listening.</li> <li>• Supervising Manning Estuary Restoration Programme</li> <li>• These could be weed specific – providing information and community awareness.</li> <li>• Possible expert panel function to identify high value areas to complement estuary and coastline management planning.</li> </ul>
<b>Capacity building</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes – very important</li> <li>• Yes – specialist areas</li> <li>• Support for community group</li> <li>• Maintain coastline momentum and build estuary program.</li> </ul>
<b>Information Gaps</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes</li> <li>• Identifying, but more importantly addressing</li> <li>• Definitely</li> <li>• Keep us up to date with regional, state, national issues</li> <li>• Investigate collaborative opportunities between Councils.</li> </ul>
<b>Facilitating</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes definitely</li> <li>• Critical</li> </ul>

<b>involvement of CMA with coastal councils, coast and marine issues.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Essential for coastal matters</li> <li>• Especially from the lower north coast area coastal issues were largely – I think the profile needs to be raised within the CMA.</li> <li>• Inclusion of issues into CAP</li> <li>• Push for maintenance of profile and subsequent action on issues.</li> </ul>
<b>Other</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Broker inclusion of C&amp;E issues in planning process currently underway</li> </ul>

## **REGIONAL NRM - CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY**

### **What message/s do you believed needs to be conveyed to the Catchment Management Authority with regard to Natural Resource Management in the Coastal Zone**

- The need to engage with Local Government. Many Councils, particularly the larger coastal councils already undertake significant NRM programs, and unless consultation occurs prior to budgets and programs are set we may be unable to achieve beneficial outcomes.
- The need to recognise the importance of coastal and marine and urban issues. In some LGA's such as Lake Macquarie, rural/agricultural issues are considered minor compared to urban and coastal issues.
- The coastal zone is a critical component of the natural and catchment landscape that deserves equal, if not greater priority and attention within CAP and funding/targets. If the CMA fails to provide adequate support to coastal NRM then a huge gap will not be addressed, which will significantly weaken the other positive outcomes of the CMA and its operation. Coastal issues must therefore be addressed.
- Ensure their scope is widened beyond the current catchment blueprint as it is very restricted/biased in its vision.
- Stronger commitment to enforcement of the Native Vegetation Act.
- Community interest and involvement in this area is high.
- I would like to make sure that all the money channelled through the CMA does not solely reflect the blue print prioritise but also areas to substantial community interest. The blueprints highlight capacity building but this cannot be achieved with just increased knowledge and CSO's, financial support is also requires. If community groups are left out they will feel under valued. There should also be a priority to prevent the good areas getting worse. We can sink all our money into really degraded areas or we can spend a little to protect the degradation of a good area.
- That a bureaucratic "tick the box" approach to the issue is unhelpful. That it needs to involve knowledgeable/qualified staff.
- Support actions, priority and programs that deliver value for processes affecting the coastal zone. Eg. Water quality, erosion and sediment control, riparian veg;
- Include actions in CAP that deliver on coastal zone management priorities and allocate funds equitably.
- Support expert panel/ coastal zone forum program.

## **SUMMARY COMMENTS**

Local government is a key player in the protection and management of the coasts and estuaries of the Hunter-Central Rivers.

The coastal zone is recognised as having a high economic value and being an asset locally and regionally. The NRM issues in the coastal zone are varied and many and although some might not be relevant to Council as far as work programming goes they are mostly always an issue.

There are many NRM issues that coastal Councils share and it is vital that they are engaged in regional initiatives. Coastcare and H-CRCMA need to work together to help facilitate more effective networking and resource sharing between coastal councils. It is vital that information exchange and cross pollination of ideas is continued throughout the region and innovative approaches to coastal management are promoted.

Coastcare is well supported at a Local Government level in the Hunter -Central Rivers Region.